



The Top 5 things Never to do as a Sport Parent:

#1. **Avoid Coaching from the sidelines**...leave that to the Coach! The worst thing for a player is to hear their parent screaming about their mistakes in front of everyone. It takes the players head right out of the game. It is okay to give encouragement, cheer or even reminders if they are working on something...but to coach from the sideline is a deal breaker.

#2. **Avoid heckling the Officials**....whether your officials are paid adults or youth volunteering to learn, you need to demonstrate a level of respect. You may not agree with a "call" but to not taper your words toward the officials gives permission to the players to do the same. In this case, demonstrating good sportsmanship is equivalent to the "Life Lesson of It isn't Fair"...sometimes in life things are not fair but learning how to respond to those moments is what builds character.

#3. **Be aware of your conduct as a parent on the sidelines**...Parents need to demonstrate self-control when talking about the Opponent. To shout out negative comments to the opponent is unnecessary and selfish. As adults we need to have a Filter and be good role models for managing what happens during playing time. Sure it gets intense and players can get aggressive and sometimes dirty...but isn't it our job as parents to show our kids how to navigate through this life lesson?

#4. **At all costs avoid talking about your child's teammates**...your child is going to express frustrations and disappointments related to their experience with teammates. Let your child blow off steam but then direct the conversation back to them and what they liked and what they could have done more of. Do not join them in "putting down other teammates", it is unproductive and does not promote the life lesson on how to be a part of a team.

#5. **The Ride Home**...Your child gets in the car and the first thing out of your mouth is...

This is a time for reflection...not to get emotionally pummeled by Mom or Dad. Sometimes it is best to say nothing at all...let them open up and begin to talk about the experience before you start to tell them your INSIGHT. Ask Permission if you can give them your thoughts about what you saw. Do not lie to them if they did not do well...it is okay to have an off game. Lying to your child or giving false praise does not build character...Maybe say something like: How do you think you played? Did you have fun? Looking back would you have done something different? It is okay to ask "Did you guys win?"...but when you only focus on winning, you are missing out on opportunities to learn about your child and who they really are.